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REMARKS

This paper is in response to the Office Action mailed on November 3, 2006. Claims 1-33 are pending in the application and are rejected, and claims 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 19, 22, 23, 24, and 30 are amended. No new matter was added to the prosecution of this application, and these amendments are made to expedite the prosecution of this case, while preserving the right to subsequently pursue the originally filed claims, and in no way limit the scope of the invention.

SPECIFICATION

Applicants have amended the specification at paragraph [0027] to properly use the trademark SIEBEL.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAWINGS

The drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) for including reference characters not mentioned in the description. In light of the above amendments to paragraph [0025], this objection is now moot.

The drawings were also objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) for including reference characters used to designate different objects. Replacement Sheets for Figures 3 and 4 have been submitted herewith, and the replacement sheets have changed the Siebel web clients, which were previously identified with reference character 135, as being identified by reference character 170.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McFarlane in view of Bremers. In light of the aforementioned claim amendments and the arguments below, the cited references, each alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the claim limitations as required by MPEP § 2143. Therefore, this rejection is unsupported by the art and Applicants respectfully request that Examiner withdraw the § 103 rejection.

Independent Claims 1, 8, 12, 19, 23, and 30

The present claimed invention generally provides a method, a system, and a computer program (claims 1, 12, and 23) for maintaining skills for agents of a contact center, comprising:

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providing profiles in a central skill database for a plurality of agents;

providing a skill-impacting system, the skill-impacting system storing skill data for each
of the plurality of agents in the central skill database, wherein storing skill data
comprises modifying at least one of the profiles;

receiving from the skill-impacting system skill data for a first agent;

updating a first profile in the central skill database for the first agent based on the skill
data received; and

selectively synchronizing routing logic of a routing system with skill-based information
from the first profile in the central skill database such that the routing logic
determines which of the plurality of agents are to handle a contact based on at
least skill data, wherein the synchronizing is independent of the updating.

and a method, a system, and a computer program (claims 8, 19, and 30) for synchronizing skill

data in a contact center, comprising:

maintaining a plurality of profiles in a central skill database corresponding to a plurality
of contact center agents, wherein the plurality of profiles comprise skill-based
ratings for a plurality of skills;

storing skill data for each of the plurality of agents in the central skill database of at least
one skill-impacting system, wherein the step of storing skill data comprises
modifying at least one of the plurality of profiles;

using the skill data from the at least one skill-impacting system to update the plurality of
profiles in the central skill database;

maintaining source data in a routing system for the contact center, wherein the source
data is based on agent skills and configures routing logic to make routing
decisions; and

selectively updating the source data based on agent skills with skill-based ratings in the
central skill database for reconfiguring the routing logic, wherein the updating the
source data is independent of updating the plurality of profiles.

The independent claims recite three distinct components: (a) a routing system, (b) a

central skill database, and (c) a skill-impacting system, "the skill-impacting system storing skill

data for each of the plurality of agents in the central skill database, wherein storing skill data

comprises modifying at least one of the profiles." The cited references fail to teach or suggest

these three distinct components or a skill-impacting system that stores skill data in a central skill

database, including modifying a profile.

The McFarlane reference discloses a data structure (Fig. 6) and database 107, which

purportedly teach the claimed central skill database, and a routing processor 108 (see Col. 5,

lines 49-54). However, the reference fails to teach or suggest a separate component that

discloses the claimed "skill-impacting system" that stores skill data in the central skill database and modifies a profile as claimed. Further, the Bremers reference also fails to teach or suggest this limitation, even when combined with McFarlane. Specifically, Bremers describes a business application 100 exporting a filtered *replica* 114 of a merchandising database 116 to a storage medium 108 (Col. 6, lines 19-26; Fig. 1) and a client *replica* 126 (Col. 6, lines 33-41; Fig. 1). However, the reference still fails to teach or suggest a distinct "skill-impacting system" that stores skill data in the central skill database and modifies a profile as claimed, even when combined with McFarlane.

The cited references fail to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations as required by MPEP § 2143. For at least this reason, the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection fails to form a *prima facie* case of obviousness, and Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejections and allowance of the claims.

Dependent Claims 2, 13, and 24

Dependent claims 2, 13, and 24 — which depend directly from claims 1, 12, and 23 — generally provide a method, a system, and a computer program for maintaining skills for agents of a contact center, "wherein the routing logic includes routing rules and routing source data for performing the step of routing, the routing source data including agent availability and the skill-based information in the routing system."

The cited references, each alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest a routing system with routing logic that includes both "routing rules and routing source data for performing the step of routing, the routing source data including agent availability and the skill-based information in the routing system." For this additional reason, the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection fails to form a *prima facie* case of obviousness, and Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejections and allowance of these claims.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests removal of the rejection and favorable action and allowance of the application.

In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at 612-607-7237. If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees including fees for any extension of time, to Deposit Account No. 50-1901 (Reference No. 60021-378501).

Respectfully submitted,

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